Foraged Foods of Spring

A Recipe Book

by Friends of the Herbal Academy

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In celebration of Herbalist Day (April 17) we fill our harvest baskets, warm our kitchens, and give thanks for nature's gifts.

What better way to celebrate Herbalist Day than to head outdoors with the intention of whipping up a delicious recipe from foraged foods—all **in honor of your herbal journey, the mentors who have shaped your path, and our biggest teachers of all, the plants.**

In spring, some of the hardiest and most nutritious botanicals are unfurling their juicy leaves and turning their cheerful petals toward the sun. By learning to safely identify and sustainably harvest the plants that are native to your region, you can connect with centuries of herbalists before you, sharing a mutual **gratitude** and **reciprocity** for our herbal allies. As a bonus, you'll be gifting your body with the minerals, vitamins, and nutrients that it craves after a long winter.

For this special ebook, we've collaborated with 10 herbalists across the world who inspire us with their knowledge of native plants. To uplift and inspire our herbal community, these **wise teachers have graciously shared their favorite spring foraging recipes with us.** These delightful recipes cover the full gamut of spring edibles with ingredients that can be found across regions: from dandelion and chickweed greens, to morel mushrooms, desert peas, fresh violet flowers, wild berries, and more. The recipes themselves are a well-rounded collection of savory dishes, desserts, and dressings that you can try alone or combine to make the ultimate Herbalist Day meal.

This ebook is our combined gift to you, an invitation to feel the wind on your face, the earth underfoot, and the herbs in your body. We so admire how you have taken the time to learn how to nourish yourself —and your family—in such a rooted, earth-centered, and herbal way, and that many of you have passed that knowledge along to your community. And that, our dear friends, is what we celebrate on Herbalist Day and everyday.

Spring blessings,
The Herbal Academy Team

P.S. If you love the way your foraged recipes turn out, post your photos on social media with the hashtag #herbalistday so we can cheer you along!

Safe & Sustainable Foraging Practices

Before we lace up our hiking boots and ready our harvest baskets, let's talk about some of the ethical and ecological concerns that come along with foraging. When we wildcraft, we take on the responsibility of maintaining the health of our ecosystems and ensuring our wild plant allies are available for generations to come. Removing plants from the wild is inherently a form of disturbance to natural habitats, and it is the wildcrafter's obligation to minimize damage not only to plant populations, but also to the ecological systems in which they live. This makes the study of foraging ethics and sustainability of paramount importance to all who wish to engage in this craft. By following sound ethical guidelines and becoming conscious stewards of nature, we are able to honor and give back to the plants that give so much to us.

PERMISSION

One basic ethical consideration is to get permission to harvest any time you venture from your own land. This applies to utilizing someone else's private property as well as any public lands where you may consider foraging.

AT-RISK AND VULNERABLE PLANTS

The commercial demand for some plants, especially those with global popularity, has caused them to be overharvested to such an extent that they are now uncommon or even rare in the wild. Many of these plants have become endangered or are considered "At-Risk" by United Plant Savers (UpS), an organization dedicated to the preservation of botanicals native to North America.

While a plant may appear to be abundant in your local bioregion, this does not necessarily mean it is sustainable to harvest. Local abundance does not equal the overall abundance of a species, especially when compared to the global demand for certain plants. Although it might be tempting to harvest at-risk plants, it is best to leave these plants alone in the wild.

UNDERSTANDING ECOLOGY

Before harvesting edibles in the wild, take the time to observe the area's ecology. Many beginners are tempted to immediately pick from the first stand of plants they come upon, but making a broader sweep of the land allows you to get a better sense for how prolific the plant is and where the most robust, populated stands are located. Also be on the lookout for and avoid disturbing any animals that might make their homes or feed in or near the plants you're foraging.

LESS IS MORE

Another crucial aspect of sustainable harvesting is to remove only a small percentage of plants from any given area. Harvesting 10% or less of a given plant stand is a good general rule, even for plants that are abundant. However, there is no universal rule that works for all scenarios, as even modest harvesting may create significant setbacks for slow-growing, slow-to-reproduce species or root harvests. It is critical to use your knowledge of the plant, observation, instincts, and ethics to decide what is appropriate.

Also ensure that your harvest does not exceed the amount of herb that you will actually process and use within an appropriate length of time. This may seem like a no-brainer, but it's fairly common for beginners to get excited in the field and overestimate their ability to process gathered botanicals. Keep in mind that plants can take much longer to process than to harvest, and it's a shame to take plants out of their habitat only to watch them grow mold in the refrigerator.

BECOMING A STEWARD

You can become a steward of the land that you forage on by making a commitment to return to the places you've foraged to observe how your harvesting has affected the ecosystem. Are the populations of species you harvested still available in abundance, or have their numbers lessened? If they have lessened, it would be best to avoid harvesting from the same location for at least a season. An even better scenario is to visit that land several times before harvesting!

In general, try to leave no trace of your presence, minimizing disturbance to the habitat as much as possible.

Savory

Wild Green Cakes

by Alan Bergo of @foragerchef

There's a reason this is the opening recipe in my book *The Forager Chef's Book of Flora*. It's a hybrid of a recipe by French Chef Jacques Chibois and one outlined by Sam Thayer in his third book, *Incredible Wild Edibles*, and a statement on culinary dichotomy, since wild plants are high-quality ingredients sought after by chefs, but also available to anyone who takes the time to get outside and learn about them. The best part is that just about any species of wild edible plant can be used, and no two batches I've ever made have been exactly the same.

My favorite part of this recipe is how the greens continue cooking on the inside of the cake, almost as if they're cooked under pressure, retaining a bright green color, with a tender bite that eats almost like meat. The cakes are meant to be a mild side dish—a different way to get your greens. If you want to jazz them up, consider serving them with a yogurt-, tomato-, or mayonnaise-based sauce. Sometimes I add cooked onions, seeds, or other alliums and herbs if I have them, so think of this recipe as a blank slate you can make your own. Wild Green Cakes are great as a side dish, but if you dress them up and make them larger they can even go on a bun.

Breakfast, lunch, brunch, dinner, or as an appetizer: I'd struggle to think of a meal that wouldn't welcome a few green cakes.

INGREDIENTS

2 packed cups blanched wild greens, or a mix of spinach, parsley, and kale

2 large eggs

¼ cup flour or flour equivalent

Kosher salt, to taste

Fresh-ground black pepper, to taste

Fresh-grated nutmeg or your favorite warm spice mixture, such as baharat

Cooking oil, such as lard or grapeseed oil, as needed for cooking the cakes

Wedges of fresh lemon, for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- To blanch the greens, bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add the greens and let cook until they wilt and turn bright green (about 1 minute).
- Using a straining ladle or tongs, transfer the greens to a colander to drain, then spread out on a baking sheet to cool for a few minutes.
- Chop the blanched greens well and mix with the eggs and flour.
- Season the mixture with salt, pepper, and nutmeg to taste; it should be well seasoned. Ideally, you'll now let the batter rest for 30 minutes or so before cooking, but it can be cooked straight away if needed.
- Cook a small piece of the mixture to test the seasoning and adjust to your taste.
- Shape ¼ cup (2 ounces) into cakes with your hands, then sauté on medium-high until browned on both sides. If your cakes seem loose or wet, mix another spoonful of flour into the batter. The cakes are sturdy and reheat well, so I usually make them in large batches.

VARIATIONS

- Using different grain flours and seasonings can give you different themes. For example, Latin American–flavored cakes made from quickweed (*Galinsoga parviflora*) and fine cornmeal, scented with cumin, are great used to scoop up guacamole—a bit like fried plantains. By the same token, chard or wild beet green cakes bound with buckwheat or millet flour would be at home with Eastern European flavors, such as sauerkraut and pork sausage. Middle Eastern–inspired cakes could be made with malva (*Malva* spp.) or violet (*Viola* spp.) leaves, seasoned with baharat spice mix, bound with ground wheat flour, and served with tahini sauce.
- Nutmeg is traditional here, but other spices, especially seeds from the carrot family (cumin, ground or green coriander, and caraway), are really good in nutmeg's place.
- Play around with combinations of bitter and "sweet" greens. Horseradish greens can be unpalatable for some people, but mixed with other greens (1 part to 3 parts) they can add a nice depth.
- Use the cakes as vehicles for dips, sauces, and salsas.
- After the cakes are cooked, they're great in a lot of places you'd use a meat patty or ground meat.

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One of the most respected voices in the world of wild food, and creator of the largest and most comprehensive culinary resource for wild mushrooms on the internet, Chef Alan Bergo spent 15 years cooking in professional kitchens, picking up a knack for foraging along the way when he realized the most prized ingredients in the finest restaurants he worked in were foraged. His first book, The Forager Chef's Book of Flora*, was published in 2021 through Chelsea Green Publishing.*

His work has been featured on the Today Show, published in the Wall Street Journal and he's appeared on screen for The Outdoor Channel and major streaming services, along with having his work published in more than 15 individual books.

Follow Chef Bergo on Instagram @foragerchef or online at www.foragerchef.com.

Magical Toadstool Canapés

by Lisa Cutcliffe of @eduliswildfood

I adore making these cute bites and people enjoy eating them! They add such a joyful element to wild picnics and foraging courses for the curious folk who come along wanting to learn more about wild food and connect with nature. While eating fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) mushrooms themselves would cause unpleasant side effects, it is fun to make these storybook mushrooms out of edible ingredients. Fun in food is so important! You can easily make these fully plant-based by carving a radish for the stem and using vegan mayonnaise (makes 12).

INGREDIENTS AND MATERIALS

12 quail eggs (alternatively, use mozzarella balls or even carved radishes)

12 cherry tomatoes (vine-ripened are tastier)

24 wild garlic buds, pickled (see next page)

1 large potato or orange (optional, for stand)

Moss, flowers, twigs, or foliage (optional, to decorate the stand)

Big pinch truffle salt (or any fine salt)

Big pinch seaweed flakes (e.g., nori or aonori)

½ tsp mayonnaise (or vegan mayonnaise)

6 kebab sticks, bamboo or wood (min 10 cm length)

Small icing bottle or mini piping bag (optional)

Plate or bowl (optional, for stand)

DIRECTIONS

- The quail egg will be your mushroom "stem." If you can't buy quail eggs ready cooked and peeled, most delis or more interesting supermarkets supply fresh. Place the quail eggs in a pan of cold water and bring to a boil. Three minutes after the water starts to boil, remove from heat, strain, and run cold water over the eggs. Next, roll the eggs gently on a hard surface to crack slightly, then peel in water to remove the shell easily. Mini mozzarella balls work well, too, if you can't find quail eggs. I've also carved a radish into a stem for a purely plant-based version.
- The cherry tomatoes are your mushroom "caps." Slice your tomatoes around the width, cutting at about 2/3 of the length. Use the larger piece of the tomato, as this gives you more room to stuff. Remove the seeds from the larger section, then set aside.
- Shorten the kebab stick to about 4 inches (10 cm). You could use cocktail sticks, but I found them just a bit too short. Using the sharp end as a tool, gently poke a pickled wild garlic bud into each side of the tomato "cap" (as if you're hiding a flavor surprise inside!). Leave the caps cut-side down on kitchen paper to drain and blot and keep the sticks aside.
- For the stand, halve a big baking potato or an orange and place on a plate or in a snug bowl. Cover with clean moss, flowers, twigs, or foliage. Evenly stab in the kebab sticks, leaving the sharp ends pointing outwards, like a hedgehog. Make sure they are easy to remove again, not stuck firm.
- Lay the truffle salt and seaweed flakes in separate piles. Dampen an egg slightly and then dip the narrow end in the salt and the wider end in the seaweed. Gently ease the egg onto a kebab skewer, seaweed-side down so it blends into the moss, leaving the spike poking through the top just less than 1 cm. Leave enough room below the egg for your fingers to be able to pull the stick out of the stand later.
- Place the stuffed tomato caps onto the spikes. Wipe the tomato caps dry, then dot on the mayo like a fly agaric toadstool, using an icing bottle or a fine teaspoon handle.

PICKLED WILD GARLIC BUDS

INGREDIENTS

(Makes a 1 pint (500 mL) jar)

*Note: you can use any edible species of wild garlic for this. Find an abundant patch and collect enough unopened flower buds to pack into the jar. Make 100% sure that you've accurately identified them. In the UK, you can use ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), three-cornered leek (*A. triquetrum*), or few-flowered leek (*A. paradoxum*). In the U.S., wild garlic (*A. canadense*) or field garlic (*A. vineale*) would work.*

Enough wild garlic buds to fill your jar

¾ cup apple cider vinegar (or other vinegar of choice, such as white wine or rice wine vinegar)

½ cup water

1 tbsp sugar

Pinch of salt

Spices—Optional. I used about 20 coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) seeds, 10 peppercorns (*Piper nigrum*), and 3 allspice (*Pimenta dioica*) berries. You can experiment with wild spices too, such as spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) berries, Alexanders (*Smyrnium olusatrum*) seed, or wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) seed.

DIRECTIONS

- Sterilize your jar and keep warm (but not hot). Pack in the garlic buds.
- Heat the vinegar in a pan with the water, sugar, salt, and spices. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- Strain the hot vinegar over the garlic buds in the jar, adding a few of the whole spices too. Seal and allow to cool and heat-seal.
- Store in refrigerator. Ideally, allow it to mature for up to 2 weeks for better flavor, but it's safe to eat immediately and should be used within 2 weeks.

Lisa Cutcliffe is a foraging instructor and wild food and drink specialist based in Leeds, UK. She loves being immersed in nature, whether in the woods looking for mushrooms or on the coast gathering herbs and seaweed. She's passionate about foraging and cooking with wild ingredients and hosting magical events and courses to bring others into her world of finding joy in both home and mindful travel, fire-cooking, wild cocktails, and fungi hunting. Find recipes and follow her adventures on Instagram @eduliswildfood or online at www.eduliswildfood.co.uk.

Stuffed Morels

by Chrisha Favors of @naturally_chrisha

When I moved to the Pacific Northwest, I began to cultivate a very fond relationship with foraging edible mushrooms. There's something magical about these forest floor cuties that bring me immense joy. Mushroom hunting is becoming a beloved pastime for me, and I enjoy partaking throughout the seasons. Springtime brings about one of my favorite varieties of mushrooms, the morel (*Morchella* spp.). Morels are some of the most interesting-looking mushrooms I've ever seen in the wild with their brain-like, ash-colored caps and hollow, white stipes (stems).

Cooking with wild mushrooms is always a fun and creative venture. With the morels, I wanted to create a dish where they can hold their regal and distinctive shape. This recipe uses what are called "burn morels," because they're often found in areas where recent fires have occurred. Burn morels have taught me more about the resilience of nature, and although these mushrooms were created out of devastation, the resiliency that exists in nature is apparent with the growth of these delectable beauties.

INGREDIENTS

8-10 fresh foraged morels (*Morchella* spp.)

1 cup cream cheese (or cream cheese substitute), softened

Herbs (rosemary, thyme, chive flowers, or your choice!), to taste

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

1 egg (or egg substitute)

1 cup breadcrumbs

½ cup Parmesan cheese (or nutritional yeast)

1 tbsp avocado oil

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
- Clean morels with a clean kitchen towel by lightly rubbing off any dirt or ash that may be present.
- Mix cream cheese, salt, pepper, and herbs together in a bowl.
- Crack an egg (or egg substitute) into a separate bowl, season with salt and pepper, and then mix.
- In a separate bowl, add breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, and more salt and pepper. Mix well.
- Fill the cavity of the morel (through the stem/stipe) with the cream cheese mixture using a pastry bag or a small spoon. Be very careful not to puncture the morels.
- Dip each of the stuffed morels in egg mixture, making sure to coat the entire surface area.
- Roll the egg-covered morels in breadcrumb mixture to create an even layer of coating.
- Place breadcrumb-coated morels onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
- Lightly drizzle avocado oil on each of the morels.
- Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the breadcrumb coating is golden brown.
- Serve while still hot and crispy!
- Garnish with herbs.

Chrisha is a naturalist, educator, and artist living in Eugene, Oregon, on her 13-acre homestead. She enjoys foraging for wild foods, homesteading, stewarding her land, gardening, hiking, dancing, playing an array of instruments, and is an advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in outdoor spaces. You can typically find her in the forest looking for edible mushroom varieties, tending to her garden space, hula hooping in her backyard, or adventuring around the Pacific Northwest. To learn more about Chrisha and her endeavors in the outdoors and beyond, follow her on Instagram and Facebook @naturally_chrisha.

Steamed Palo Verde Peas

by Felicia Ruiz of @feliciacocotzin

My favorite palo verde "peas" come from the Foothills Palo Verde (*Parkinsonia microphylla*) that grow throughout the Sonoran Desert. Also known as Little-Leaf Palo Verde and Kuk Chehedagi by the O'odham, their ripe pods are ready for picking beginning in late April. I know when they are ripe when the peas are bulging out of their pod jackets, much like an edamame pod.

The pods vary in color, with many being bright green, but they can also be flecked with magenta and purple. If you wait too long to harvest them, the sweet crisp peas will quickly turn rock hard, needing to be ground at that stage. Palo verde peas can be eaten raw; however, personally, I digest them better when cooked. This is a simple way to prepare them.

INGREDIENTS

Palo verde peas (*Parkinsonia microphylla*), shelled

Water

Lemon juice, to taste

Sea salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS

- Place shelled palo verde peas in a saucepan lined with a steaming basket.
- Add water to just below the basket base, place the lid on the pan, and steam until desired softness. Remove the basket and place peas in a small bowl.
- Squeeze a little lemon juice on them with a sprinkling of sea salt.

*Felicia Cocotzin Ruiz is a curandera, author (*Earth Medicines*, Roost Books 2021), Indigenous foods activist, and natural foods chef whose work is deeply rooted in the healing properties of all earth medicines. Her work has been featured in* Food & Wine, Spirituality & Health*, and on Padma Lakshmi's* Taste The Nation*, among many other platforms. You can connect with Felicia on her website at* www.kitchencurandera.com.

Nettle Pasta & Flour

by Spencre McGowan of @gingertooth_

The first time I made nettle pasta, my heart grew three sizes larger due to the pride I felt over such a fine dish. The long noodles were a deep shade of green that can only be described as ethereal, and they tasted like a warm, witchy hug. The thing that I've learned about pasta is that you really have to trust your intuition while making it. The kneading process is a little long winded, giving you the time to get to know the feel of the dough. Using your hands to work with food is one of my favorite aspects of cooking. There is so much love and passion that goes into the food that nourishes us, especially when it comes to handmade pasta.

Serve nettle pasta with butter, garlic, and roasted tomatoes or make a carbonara drowned in shaved Parmesan. These are hearty, flavor-packed noodles that will fill you up, yet get you going back for seconds. This recipe appears in my upcoming cookbook, *Forest + Home: Cultivating an Herbal Kitchen*, which comes out in August 2022 with Andrews McMeel Publishing.

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup nettle (*Urtica* spp.) leaf flour*

2¾ cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp kosher salt

4 large eggs

Olive oil for hands

DIRECTIONS

- Mix the nettle flour*, salt, flour, and eggs in a large bowl. Combine with your hands until dough is shaggy, then dump onto the countertop and knead until dough is smooth and elasticky, which will take about 10 minutes.
- Cover with plastic wrap and let rest for 30 minutes.
- Cut dough into halves or quarters and roll out.
- Cut as desired or process through a pasta maker.
- For later use, freeze pasta on a baking sheet, then transfer to a storage container once pasta is completely frozen. Fresh pasta will take just a few minutes to cook in boiling water. Frozen pasta will take just a couple minutes longer. Keep an eye on the pasta as it cooks and test accordingly, just as you would with "regular" pasta.

*HOW TO MAKE NETTLE FLOUR

Making nettle flour is easy! Take 1-3 cups of dried nettle (*Urtica* spp.) leaves to get about ½ cup powder. Grind herbs in a food processor or clean coffee grinder until nettle has the consistency of all-purpose flour. Try this with other dried herbs, such as tulsi (*Ocimum* spp.) aerial parts, rose (*Rosa* spp.) petal, or calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) petal.

Spencre McGowan (she/her) is a certified herbalist, cookbook author, and artist living amongst the icy caps of Montana. She is the author of Blotto Botany: a Lesson in Healing Cordials & Plant Magic *(HarperCollins) and the upcoming* Forest & Home: Cultivating an Herbal Kitchen *(Andrews McMeel). Find her on Instagram @gingertooth_, TikTok @spencrelinnea, and online at* www.GingerTooth.com.

Sweet

Dandelion & Brown Sugar Cake

by Lauren May of @mustloveherbs

I have many happy childhood memories of picking dandelions with my grandmother. She would put them up to my chin and if they glowed yellow then it meant I liked butter. I don't know why, but this memory has just stuck with me as one of those precious childhood moments. I do, in fact, like butter. However, I like dandelions even more! They are a beneficial liver detoxifier, are packed full of antioxidants, help to manage high blood pressure, and support healthy cholesterol levels.

The entire dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) plant is edible. The root is wonderful as a tea or herbal coffee. The greens make for an amazing salad or are perfect when cooked and added to dishes like lasagna. The petals are also great for baking with and garnishing, like I did here. You can also batter the flower heads and deep fry them.

INGREDIENTS (FOR CAKE)

1½ cups all-purpose flour

¼ tsp baking soda

¼ tsp baking powder

¼ tsp salt

1½ sticks butter at room temperature

½ cup white sugar

½ cup brown sugar

3 eggs

½ cup buttermilk

1 cup dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) flowers (yellow parts only)

INGREDIENTS (FOR ICING)

4 ounces cream cheese at room temperature

½ stick butter (¼ cup) at room temperature

2 tsp vanilla extract

Pinch of kosher salt

1½ to 3 cups confectioners' sugar (depending on desired consistency)

DIRECTIONS (FOR CAKE)

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Grease 9" cake pan. Use butter and parchment paper to line.
- In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
- In a stand mixer, cream together the butter and sugars until light and fluffy. Add the eggs in one at a time. After all eggs are added, turn the mixer off and scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl, making sure there isn't any unmixed butter and sugar.
- With the mixer on low, add in buttermilk and flour mixture by alternating between flour and buttermilk until both are gone. Mix until evenly distributed. Add in the dandelion petals and make sure they are evenly incorporated (they tend to clump together).
- Pour the batter into your greased pan and bake for approximately 35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean.
- Allow the cake to cool in the pan for a minimum of 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, flip the cake out carefully onto a wire rack and allow to cool for another 30 minutes. While the cake cools you may prepare the icing.

DIRECTIONS (FOR ICING)

- In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, butter, vanilla, and salt. Use an electric mixer on medium speed to mix thoroughly until smooth and creamy.
- Add in the confectioners' sugar ½ cup at a time, mixing in between until desired consistency and sweetness is achieved. There are no wrong answers here!
- Spread the icing evenly over the top of the cooled cake. Enjoy!

Lauren May's friends call her "Herbs." She is an Appalachian with roots in her area running 200+ years deep. She has been taught generational knowledge on how to care for our land and how our land will in turn care for us. She is a forager, gardener, and baker, and loves using natural elements throughout her bakes. You can find out more over on her Instagram @mustloveherbs.

Wild Dewberry Cobbler

by Nam Joti Kaur Khalsa of @bluecypressbotanicals

The arrival of wild dewberries in the Texas Hill Country is a sure indication that spring has sprung! Dewberries (*Rubus* spp.) are a native blackberry that can be found growing near rivers and creeping low across fields. Since the stems are covered in thorns, harvesting from a dewberry patch requires that you slow down and pay attention. They provide nutrition to the local fauna, as they are loaded with vitamins A, B, and C.

I love dewberries because they remind me of the sweetness of spring, which is short and fleeting. Spring is the season of the dewberry, and they are gone by the time the heat of summertime arrives.

INGREDIENTS

1 stick (½ cup) butter

About 4 cups of wild and washed dewberries (*Rubus* spp.)

½ cup all-purpose flour

1 cup milk or milk substitute (I used raw goat's milk from our herd)

Generous pinch of sea salt

2 tsp baking powder

½ cup cane sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Place the stick of butter into a large cast iron pan and place in the oven to melt.
- Smash the wild dewberries in a bowl to release their juices.
- In a separate bowl, combine the flour, milk, salt, baking powder, and sugar. Stir the melted butter and vanilla extract into the flour mixture.
- Pour the batter into the cast iron pan and pour the wild dewberries and their juices into the center of the batter. Swirl some of the batter over the top of the berries.
- Bake until the top is golden brown. Enjoy!

Nam Joti Kaur Khalsa lives in a small river town in the Texas Hill Country with her husband and three teenage children. She is a broom maker, goat farmer, gardener, meditator, and folk herbalist with a focus on the wild plants growing in her region. You can find Nam's work on her website www.BlueCypressSchool.org *and on Instagram @bluecypressbotanicals.*

Wild Rainbow Chocolate Slab

by Roushanna Gray of @veldandsea

This is a spring-inspired raw chocolate perfect for any occasion. It can be a superfood breakfast treat with a hot drink, nourishment after a wild swim or mountain hike, or a festive addition to picnics, dessert, or a party! What I love about this recipe is that you can make it during any season and get creative by switching up the base ingredients for whatever you have going on in your wild pantry—think wild flours, nuts and seeds, fresh or dried wild greens, and herbs. You can add sweet spices for a warming quality or cooling herbs for a hot day.

The coconut oil can be infused slowly with your favorite herbs and flowers like rose (*Rosa* spp.), chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*), lavender (*Lavandula* spp.), mint (*Mentha* x *piperita*), vanilla (*Vanilla planifolia*), seaweeds, or even dried mushrooms, adding a beautiful layer of flavor, scent, and beneficial properties. With moments of magic and love in each slice, one bite of this Wild Rainbow Chocolate Slab will transport you back in time to each adventure it took to create this wildly delicious treat.

INGREDIENTS (FOR THE BASE)

3 tbsp acorn flour

1 ½ cups sunflower seeds

½ cup almond flour

2 cups oats

2 cups dates, soaked and drained

2 cups shredded coconut

6 tbsp seaweed-infused coconut oil (see next page)

½ tsp cinnamon (*Cinnamomum* spp.) bark powder

2 tbsp dried nettle (*Urtica dioica*) leaf

¼ cup fresh dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) leaf

1 cup wild berries of your choice, sliced

INGREDIENTS (FOR THE TOPPING)

10 ½ ounces good-quality dark chocolate

2 tbsp tahini

A pinch of sea salt

Rainbow garnish: edible flowers, wild berries, young wild greens like dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*), nasturtiums (*Tropaeolum majus*), goosefoot (*Chenopodium* spp.), wood sorrel (*Oxalis* spp.), blanched nettle (*Urtica dioica*)

DIRECTIONS

- To make the base, place all of the ingredients except the sliced wild berries into a food processor and blitz until all of the ingredients are well combined and the mixture is firm, adding more dates if the mix is too crumbly and falls apart, instead of holding firm when pressed together. Decant the mix into a large bowl and stir in the berries.
- Place the mix into a non-stick greased and parchment paper-lined deep regular rectangular baking tray. Press down flat with the back of a spoon until compressed and the surface is even and flat.
- To make the topping, break up the chocolate and heat it together with the tahini and sea salt in a double boiler over a medium heat, stirring continuously with a whisk until melted. Pour the melted chocolate over the base, smooth over with the back of a spoon, and decorate with your rainbow garnish while dreaming of a springtime flower-filled field.
- Place the tray in the fridge until set.
- Carefully cut into slices with a sharp knife and enjoy!

HOW TO MAKE INFUSED COCONUT OIL

INGREDIENTS

6 tbsp coconut oil

1 piece of seaweed or herbs/flowers of your choice

DIRECTIONS

- Fill the bottom pot of a double boiler with an inch or two of water and place the top pot on with the ingredients inside.
- Set the heat to medium until the oil starts to simmer from the heat of the steam being released.
- Reduce heat to low and let the flavors delicately infuse into the oil for about 1 hour or until the oil takes on a scent.
- Remove from heat, strain and use as a liquid oil in the recipe.

Founder of Veld and Sea, Roushanna Gray is a wild food artist, foodie, and avid forager. She shares her passion about the edible landscape through immersive educational experiences, connection, and creativity. Inspired by the natural world around her, she has been working with the exciting and diverse wild flavors found in the mountains and gardens for the last 14 years. The wide range of delicious and nutritious culinary offerings from the beautiful intertidal rock pools along the South African coastline also play a major role in her cooking and teaching. Connect with Roushanna online at www.VeldAndSea.com *or on Instagram @veldandsea.*

Dressings

Spring Herb-Infused Vinegar

by Keitha Thủy Young of @thepeacefulseed

What I love about this herbal preparation is that it takes apple cider vinegar, a potent ingredient found in almost every household, then infuses it with bright spring herbs and all the extra minerals and nutrition that they offer.

Herbal vinegars are very old, traditional preparations whereby the vinegar extracts and preserves the properties of herbs without the need for the alcohol used in tinctures. This makes them favorable for regular use, for children, and for folks avoiding alcohol. From there, it's easy to integrate them into your everyday routine, using as you normally would any vinegar but with all of those additional nutrients brightening up your drinks or meals.

This particular recipe features three dear herbs—nettle (*Urtica* spp.), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)—which are all incredibly rich in vitamins and minerals that help nourish and replenish the body after a winter of perhaps less fresh and more dense comfort foods. Between the three of them, these herbs also offer an immense array of benefits and I'm grateful to have them growing in wild abundance in our backyard (as valued garden members, not weeds!). But ultimately there's no right way to prepare a folk recipe like this, so feel free to swap out these herbs for whichever edible spring friends you find growing in your own bioregion.

This recipe was first published on the Milkwood blog.

INGREDIENTS AND MATERIALS

Foraged spring herbs (I use fresh nettle (*Urtica* spp.), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) leaves), enough to fill your selected jar 1/2 to 3/4 of the way full

Apple cider vinegar or vinegar of choice, enough to fill your jar of choice

Scissors, a knife, or mortar and pestle (optional)

A clean, dry jar (size relative to how many herbs you have and how much you want to make)

Sieve

Cheesecloth

Large bowl or glass jug

Funnel

Bottle to store your infused vinegar in

DIRECTIONS (FOLK METHOD)

- Gather the leaves of these three spring herbs (or your alternative herbs of choice) on a sunny day around mid-morning or once the morning dew has dried (too much added water content can spoil the vinegar).
- Take all your herbs and either crush with your hand, chop with some scissors or a knife, or pound with a mortar and pestle. More broken surface area offers more potential for the nutrients to infuse into the vinegar.
- This folk method of extraction doesn't require measurements, so intuitively fill your jar with your chopped/crushed herbs, anywhere from half full to three-quarters full.
- Top the jar with undiluted apple cider vinegar.
- If your jar has a metal lid, place a piece of parchment paper in between the jar and lid before closing so that the vinegar doesn't corrode the metal.

Continued on next page

- Keep your infusion in a cool, dark place for 14 days, shaking it regularly—every day if you remember, but every few days is okay, too. (Tip: pop a note on a mirror if your infusion is stashed in a cupboard so you don't forget it!) This act of shaking shifts any air bubbles to prevent molding and helps stimulate better extraction.
- After two to four weeks, it's time to strain! Place a cheesecloth (or clean natural fiber cloth) inside a sieve, over a large bowl, or over a large pouring jug. Strain by pouring all contents of the infusion jar into the cloth-lined sieve.
- Let the infused vinegar drip through and then squeeze the cloth with plants inside so that any remaining liquid comes out.
- Gratefully discard the used plant matter in your compost bin or under a bush.
- Then depending on your pouring skills, you may need a funnel to pour your infused vinegar into a clean bottle.
- Label this bottle with the herbs used and date made and keep it somewhere in your kitchen where you'll see it often so that you remember to integrate this vibrant, nutritious spring infusion into your daily routine. This herb-infused vinegar will keep for up to six months.

Suggested use:
Mix into a salad dressing; splash on top of steamed veggies; add a dollop to your soup, stew, or bone broth; add a dash to your daily water bottle; take a teaspoon as part of your morning routine; or even sponge it diluted onto feverish skin to help reduce temperatures—experiment with your herbal-infused vinegar and enjoy!

Keitha Thủy Young is a disabled mother, farmer, folk herbalist, seed-keeper, and advocate for seed sovereignty of mixed Vietnamese and Scottish heritage. She gratefully tends Seed Medicine Garden—preserving biodiversity in vegetables, herbs and flowers, adapting seeds to climate change, and crafting plant magic for healing justice on unceded Kaurna land in South Australia. Connect with Keitha on Instagram at @thepeacefulseed.

Wild Violet Vinaigrette

by Shanna Poveda of @medicinemija

Violets (*Viola* spp.) are one of the first flowers that grace us with their presence each spring. They quickly fill backyards and open fields with their beautiful shade of purple. Not only is this flower eye-catching, but it is also a very easy plant to incorporate into culinary creations.

After a long winter, violet is very giving, abundant, and mixes well with other early spring wild edibles. We love exploring different violet creations, but this vinaigrette recipe has been a staple in our household due to how easy it is to make, how striking it looks, and how delicious it tastes. When the wild baby greens are abundant during early spring, this dressing is a necessity!

INGREDIENTS (WILD VIOLET VINEGAR)

½ cup purple violet (*Viola* spp.) flowers

1½ cups white wine vinegar

INGREDIENTS (VINAIGRETTE)

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

¼ cup Wild Violet Vinegar

1 tsp local honey

½ tsp ground Himalayan sea salt

¼ tsp black pepper

¼ tsp garlic powder

1 tbsp minced wild onions (*Allium* spp.) (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Gather your violet flowers. Rinse them thoroughly with cool water and let dry.
- Place violets in a pint-sized glass jar and pour vinegar over the top. If you are using a metal lid, cover the top of the jar with parchment paper and then lid the jar. You do not need to do this if you are using a plastic lid.
- Allow the violets to infuse in the vinegar overnight or until the infusion turns beautifully pink.
- Strain the violets.
- To make the vinaigrette, combine all ingredients in a glass jar and shake until the vinaigrette is combined.
- Transfer to a serving dispenser and use immediately on fresh salad greens or foraged baby greens like dock (*Rumex crispus*) leaves, plantain (*Plantago* spp.) leaves, or dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) greens. Spring is the perfect time for eating greens—they get more bitter as the season passes.
- Store in the glass jar in the refrigerator for 3-5 days.

Shanna Poveda is an Indigenous herbalist, mother, and homesteader located in Bloomington, Indiana. Shanna teaches herbal education and offers herbal remedies through Wild Mint Apothecary. You can follow her journey on Instagram @medicinemija and view a list of her offerings online at www.WildMintApothecary.com.

Herbie Yogurt Dressing

by the Herbal Academy team

This is a cooling and zesty dressing, perfect for pairing with spring salads! The combination of yogurt, garlic, and fresh foraged herbs makes this dressing earthy and nourishing. Plus, it's an easy way of incorporating abundant wild spring greens into your dishes.

This version features foraged chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and mint (*Mentha* x *piperita*) leaves, and you could experiment with different herbs such as hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*) leaves, curly parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*), dill (*Anethum graveolens*), or cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*) leaves. (Makes 2 servings)

INGREDIENTS

½ cup full-fat, plain yogurt (for a vegan version, opt for plant-based yogurt)

1/8 cup chopped fresh herbs

1 clove chopped and peeled garlic

1-2 tsp lemon juice

1/8 tsp ground black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) fruit

salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

- Simply place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until evenly mixed. If you don't have a blender, just shake all the ingredients up in a well-sealed glass jar (you'll have to do an especially good job at chopping the garlic and parsley in this case).

Are you officially inspired to whip up some delicious spring recipes from foraged foods? We sure hope so!

Herbalist Day is meant as a day of appreciation and support. Consider making a few of these recipes and inviting your herbalist friends over to enjoy a shared meal. You can make it a special occasion by decorating your table with delicate spring blooms, like daffodil, hyacinth, and tulips, lighting a few candles, and placing a heartfelt Herbalist Day Card or homemade Floral Cone at each table setting.

Community and friendship are invaluable treasures, and Herbalist Day (April 17) is the perfect day to let your herbal community know just how much they mean to you.

Download your FREE Herbalist Day Cards here!

April 17
Every herbalist is a teacher and every herbalist is a student. Thank you for playing a large role in my herbal journey.
Happy Herbalist Day!
parsley for gratitude, thanks, & useful knowledge
Inspired by learning from one another!
angelica for inspiration
Happy Herbalist Day!
APRIL 17
REMEMBERING you today.
THANK YOU FOR TEACHING ME!
HAPPY HERBALIST DAY!
rosemary for remembrance
Thank You
FOR BEING PART of my HERBAL COMMUNITY!
Happy Herbalist Day!

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